

VLR-1/18/72 NRHP-5/19/72

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: VIRGINIA	
COUNTY: CAROLINE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: GAY MONT
AND/OR HISTORIC: GAY MONT

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 6 mi. S E of Rt. 17, 2.4 mi. N W of intersection with Rt. 301.			
CITY OR TOWN: Port Royal vicinity (William Lloyd Scott, Eight District Congressman)			
STATE Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: Caroline	CODE 033

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Mr. and Mrs. James S. Patton Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities	STATE: VIRGINIA
STREET AND NUMBER: Gay Mont c/o Mr. Robert A. Mordock, Executive Director 2705 Park Avenue Richmond, Va. 23220	
CITY OR TOWN: Rappahannock Academy	
STATE: Virginia	
CODE 51	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Caroline County Court House		COUNTY: CAROLINE
STREET AND NUMBER: Court Square		
CITY OR TOWN: Bowling Green	STATE: Virginia	
CODE 51		

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1939; 1940	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> County
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress			
STREET AND NUMBER: Washington			
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: D. C.	CODE 11	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION			
CONDITION	(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins		<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE			
<p>The original Gay Mont house, built in the late eighteenth century, was a rectangular, two-story frame structure with a gable roof and two exterior end chimneys. Architecturally the house belonged to an interesting group of Rappahannock valley plantation houses that includes Belle Grove and Nanzatico in King George County, and the Gray House and the Brockenbrough House in nearby Port Royal. A common feature in the design of these houses is an enclosed stair between the walls of the center hall and an adjacent chamber, and a wide elliptical arch with paneled soffit dividing the hall. These houses also feature handsome paneled chimney pieces, often with crosseted frames and flanking pilasters.</p> <p>Gay Mont was enlarged in 1819 with the addition of one-story stuccoed brick wings on either side and a one-story colonnade of stuccoed brick Tuscan columns across the east front. In 1834 an interesting one-story octagonal music room was erected on the house's west front. The house was further enlarged in 1839 by the placement of an octagonal ended library on the end of the north wing, and a matching office on the end of the south wing. The interior of the house was embellished in the early nineteenth century with a handsome set of French scenic wallpaper, "Scenes from the Bay of Naples" by Dufour.</p> <p>In June, 1959, a fire destroyed the frame center part of the house and the octagonal music room, and gutted the wings. This center section has since been reconstructed on the original Flemish bond brick foundations, incorporating the undamaged Flemish bond exterior chimneys. This reconstruction follows the original house in form and plan, although it was built as a stuccoed masonry structure rather than a frame one. The colonnade survived intact and was retained for the east front. The walls of the wings also survived and were restored, incorporating their unusual original chimneys. It is speculated that these wing chimneys with their exposed twisted flues were built thusly because it was intended that the wings have steeper roofs. The original low rooflines were repeated in the reconstruction, however. The octagonal music room was not rebuilt, although its foundation was kept to provide the base for a terrace overlooking the garden. By fortuitous circumstance a set of "Bay of Naples" paper, removed years ago from the walls of another "Gay Mont" near Staunton, Virginia, was secured and hung in the room that was formerly papered with similar scenes. Reproductions of the paper are being used to decorate the hall.</p> <p>Immediately to the south of the house is an early brick outbuilding, probably the original kitchen. As first constructed sometime in the eighteenth century, this outbuilding was a frame structure with a massive Flemish bond chimney. This chimney was later incorporated into a brick structure laid in American bond. No other early outbuildings remain on the property.</p> <p>The location of Gay Mont is accentuated by its prominent placement on a high ridge overlooking the Rappahannock Valley. The immediate setting of the house is enhanced by the survival, virtually intact, of the landscaping and gardens laid out in the early nineteenth century. To the rear of the house remain the formal gardens, laid out in the French manner in the 1820's, and, although some of the original flower beds have been eradicated, the overall design is retained. In front of the house terraces drop down the ridge towards the original drive way, on the second level of which stands "the Beauty Spot," an observation spot for the area. Beside</p>			

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

Page 1.

(Number all entries)

STATE	
VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	
CAROLINE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

7.

each wing in the front of the house stand large mounds of overgrown English-boxwood, once borders for rose beds in the early nineteenth century. The remarkable survival of the romantic setting around the house helps erase the scars caused by the fire.

Gay Mont is situated on 318½ acres, all of which has been included with this report because the owners are presently engaged in negotiations with the Commonwealth of Virginia to place these acres under a permanent open-space, historic easement. Once this has been accomplished the rural setting at Gay Mont will be perpetually protected.

8.

original lines, incorporating as much original material as possible and a large number of family furnishings have been returned. Miraculously a new Gay Mont now stands overlooking the Valley where it has stood as a landmark for almost two centuries.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian

☐ 16th Century

☒ 18th Century

☒ 20th Century

☐ 15th Century

☐ 17th Century

☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal

☐ Education

☐ Political

☐ Urban Planning

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Engineering

☐ Religion/Phi-

☐ Other (Specify)

☐ Historic

☐ Industry

☐ Philosophy

☐ Agriculture

☐ Invention

☐ Science

☒ Architecture

☒ Landscape

☐ Sculpture

☐ Art

☐ Architecture

☐ Social/Human-

☐ Commerce

☐ Literature

☐ Italian

☐ Communications

☐ Military

☐ Theater

☐ Conservation

☐ Music

☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Phoenix-like, Gay Mont has risen from the ashes of the destructive fire of June, 1959, to stand again on its prominent site overlooking the Rappahannock Valley. Although the original center section was destroyed and the wings gutted in the holocaust, the present owners have painstakingly rebuilt the house, restoring as much of its former appearance as possible. Great care was taken to retain as much of the surviving fabric of the building as possible so, with the regrettable exception of the fine interior woodwork and detailing of the old house, the present Gay Mont is a commendable copy.

Gay Mont was built in the latter part of the eighteenth century by John Hipkins (circa 1749-1804), a merchant of Port Royal, on land he had assembled between 1786 and 1799. At his death in 1804 Hipkins left this property, then called "Rose Hill," to his only grandson, John Hipkins Bernard, then a boy of twelve. The estate was managed by Hipkins' widow who enlarged the original 976 acres to 1,417 and ran the plantation until her grandson reached the age of twenty-one in 1813. During Bernard's ownership the place was to reach its zenith as a plantation.

In 1816 Bernard married Jane Gay Robertson (1795-1852), daughter of William and Elizabeth Bolling Robertson and changed the name of his seat to "Gay Mont" in honor of his wife. Two years later he departed for a tour of Europe that was to influence so greatly the future appearance of Gay Mont. During his travels in France he was much impressed with French landscaping and architecture and took extensive notes as well as collecting seeds and plants that were sent back to Gay Mont. Upon his return in 1819 Bernard laid out the formal gardens to the rear of the house, placing symmetrical walkways running between beds of shrubs and flowers. At the same time he enlarged the acreage of the plantation by 700 acres and added the two stuccoed, brick wings and the colonnade of Tuscan columns to the main house.

At Bernard's death in 1858 three of his children purchased the house and 445 acres from the other heirs. One of these, Helen Struan Bernard, acquired the homeplace in 1865 after her marriage to her cousin, Philip L. Robb, grandson of John Hipkins Bernard's sister. Gay Mont remained in the hands of the Robb heirs until it was sold in 1958. After the disastrous fire in 1959 it was brought back into the family by Mr. and Mrs. James S. Patton, Mrs. Patton being a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Philip L. Robb.

Although severely damaged by fire, Gay Mont has been gradually brought back to its former appearance by its present owners. The grounds and gardens have been rehabilitated, the house has been rebuilt along its

see continuation sheet page 1.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Blackford, Charles M., Memoirs of Life In & Out of the Army of Virginia, II, 132.

Edith Tunis Sale, ed., Historic Gardens of Virginia (Richmond, 1930).

Baldwin, Frank Conger, "Early Architecture of the Rappahannock Valley," Journal of the American Institute of Architects (August, 1915), III, 329-334.

Patton, James S., genealogy of the Hipkins, Bernard, Robb family (unpublished typescript, November, 1971).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R		LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds			Degrees Minutes Seconds				
NW	38° 10' 39"	77° 14' 34"	° ' "			° ' "				
NE	38° 10' 39"	77° 13' 12"	° ' "			° ' "				
SE	38° 09' 42"	77° 13' 12"	° ' "			° ' "				
SW	38° 09' 42"	77° 14' 34"	° ' "			° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 318½ acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

January, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:

Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN:

Richmond

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name

James W. Moody, Jr., Director

Title Va. Historic Landmarks Commission

Date

JAN 18 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

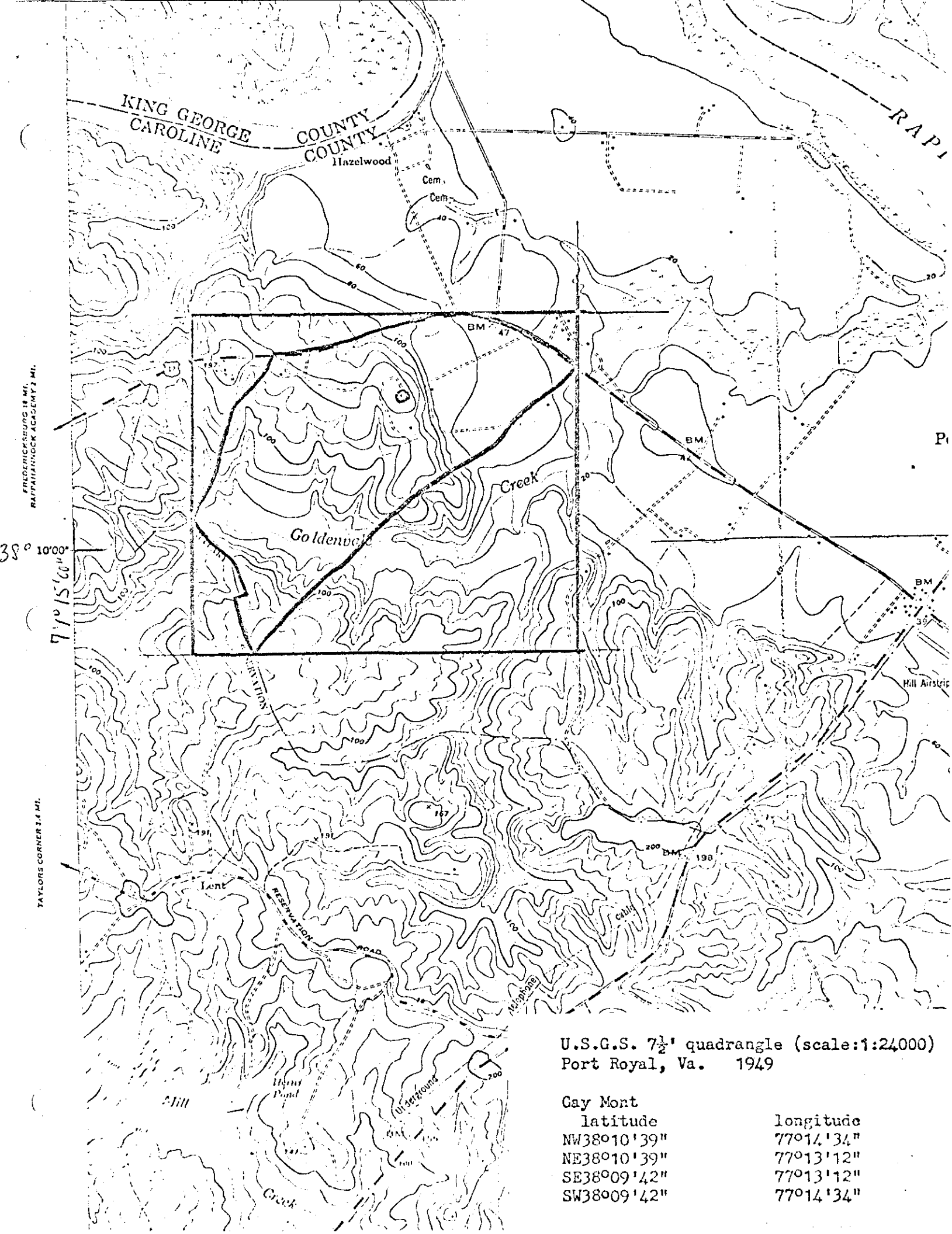
Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
Port Royal, Va. 1949

	latitude	longitude
Cay Mont		
NW38°10'39"		77°14'34"
NE38°10'39"		77°13'12"
SE38°09'42"		77°13'12"
SW38°09'42"		77°14'34"